
Education & Career Action Plans

Report 1: Fall 2013 Survey Results

Part I. Educational Setting (N=168)

Highlights

- A majority of the respondents (83%) work in high schools or schools that serve students in grades 9–12.
- Nearly one-quarter of the respondents represent independent charter schools.
- Slightly more than two-fifths of the schools are located in urban areas. Suburban schools comprise one-fifth of the sample and one-third are in rural areas. Five responses were received from schools located on reservations.
- A majority of the responses (86 of 168) are from schools in Maricopa County. Responses were not received from any schools located in Greenlee and La Paz Counties.
- One half of the respondents indicated that their schools have three or more certified counselors, while the other half have two or fewer certified counselors.
- About one-third of the respondents work in schools with ratios of one counselor to between 400 and 550 students.

Data Tables

1. Grade levels served:

	n	%
Pre–K–5	5	3
Grades 6–8	7	4
Grades 9–12	139	83
K–12	22	13
Other: Grades 7–12	5	3

2. Type of school:

	n	%
District School	114	68
District Charter School	10	6
Public Charter School	39	23
Online only	5	3

3. School locations:

	n	%
Urban	74	44
Suburban	33	20
Rural	56	33
Reservation	5	3

4. Participating counties:

	n	%
Apache	5	3
Cochise	8	5
Coconino	5	3
Gila	1	1
Graham	2	1
Greenlee	0	0
La Paz	0	0
Maricopa	86	51
Mohave	7	4
Navajo	5	3
Pima	19	11
Pinal	15	9
Santa Cruz	1	1
Yavapai	5	3
Yuma	9	5

5. Certified school counselors:

	n	%
None	23	14
One	45	27
Two	16	10
Three	13	8
Four or more	71	42

6. Counselor to student ratios:

	n	%
Less than 1 : 100	11	7
1 : 100–250	27	16
1 : 250–400	45	27
1 : 400–550	54	32
1 : 550–700	10	6
Greater than 1 : 700	3	2
Not applicable	18	11

Part II. Implementation (N=147)

Highlights

- Ninety percent of the respondents implement ECAPs in grades 9 through 12.
- School counselors (82%) are mainly responsible for implementing ECAPs.
- One respondent stated that students are not developing ECAPs, and nearly two-thirds of the respondents appear to have specific development processes in place.
- Commonly implemented ECAP elements include career guidance (86%), a comprehensive focus (85%), and skill/interest inventories and assessments (84%). The next most commonly implemented ECAP elements are career pathway connections (69%), portfolios (68%), and flexibility (63%). Just over one-third of the respondents (37%) indicated that ECAPs are developed collaboratively by students, parents, and school-based staff.
- Access to online career information systems and/or electronic portfolios is the strategy used most (86%) to develop ECAPs. More than half of the respondents also listed adequate time for planning, reflection, guidance, and ongoing advisement as well as opportunities for positive interactions and student engagement with teachers as key development strategies.
- College nights/financial aid nights was the most selected (69%) approach for involving parents/guardians in the ECAP process.
- At least half of the schools appear to track the percentage of students filing electronic plans and/or portfolios (54%) and include the plans as part of a student's record (50%).
- All but nine of the respondents indicated that ECAPs are either partially (54%) or fully (40%) implemented at their schools.
- One-third of the respondents report being at a beginning level (i.e., levels 1–3) of implementation, another one-third is at an intermediate level (i.e., levels 4 and 5), and the final one-third is at an advanced level (i.e., levels 6 and 7).
- One-half of the respondents use both paper and electronic formats to save ECAP information.
- More than half of the respondents (60%) use the Arizona Career Information System to assist with ECAP implementation, and just 10 percent of respondents are not using an electronic tool.
- While more than two-thirds of the respondents (71%) transfer ECAPs electronically between grade levels, only 44 percent appear to share the information electronically when students transfer to other schools.
- More than one-third of the respondents (38%) work with community colleges and other partners to help students with the ECAP process.

Data Tables

7. Grade levels that schools implement ECAPs:

	n	%
12 th grade	133	90
11 th grade	134	91
10 th grade	133	90
9 th grade	142	96

	n	%
8 th grade	20	14
7 th grade	6	4
6 th grade	5	3
5 th grade	0	0

8. Persons responsible for implementing ECAPs:

	n	%
School counselors	122	82
School administrators	29	20
Classroom/subject teachers	40	27
CTE teachers	27	18
Elective subject teachers	14	9
Transition coordinators/ Special education teachers	20	14

9. ECAP development:

	n	%
Embedded into current classroom and counseling curricula, referred to across content areas, and updated regularly.	47	32
Developed during a single course or series of counseling experiences.	49	33
Developed in one or more sessions either at a computer or by completing a few handouts.	35	24
Students are addressing one or more ECAP attributes (e.g., academic goals, career goals, postsecondary plans, and extracurricular activities) but more could be done.	15	10
Students are not developing ECAPs.	1	1

10. ECAP elements implemented:

	n	%
Collaborative development (i.e., developed by students, parents, and school-based staff)	55	37
Comprehensive focus (i.e., include academic, career, and personal goals)	125	85
Skill and interest inventories or assessments	123	84
Career guidance	126	86
Connection to career pathways	101	69
Flexibility (i.e., updated at regular intervals, responsive to changing interests)	92	63
Portfolios (i.e., opportunities for students to document their academic, extracurricular, work, and personal experiences and achievements over time)	100	68

11. Strategies to implement ECAPs:

	n	%
Strong leadership and clear articulation of ECAP objectives	67	46
Resources and training for counselors and educators	68	46
Opportunities for positive interactions and student engagement with teachers	79	54
Offering a career-based curriculum to guide advising	55	37
Access to online career information systems and/or electronic portfolios	126	86
Adequate time for planning, reflection, guidance, and ongoing advisement	79	54
District collaboration with business, community, and/or higher education	43	29

12. Parent/guardian involvement:

	n	%
ECAP conferences held during the day	27	18
ECAP conferences held in the evening	30	20
ECAP paper documents sent home for parent signature	60	41
Electronic communication/signature	45	31
College nights/financial aid nights	101	69
Not yet actively involving parents/guardians	27	18
Other	11	7

13. Mechanisms and metrics to monitor implementation and outcomes:

	n	%
Mandated course that includes ECAP completion	34	23
ECAP conferences for middle school students	11	7
Student led parent-teacher conferences	12	8
Partial credit for developing and updating an ECAP	14	10
Plan included in student's record	73	50
Graduation requirement	64	44
Notation on transcript	8	5
Percentage of students filing electronic plans and/or portfolios	81	55
Percentage of plans developed with parental input and/or signed by student, parent, and school-based staff	35	24
Percentage of educators participating in professional development	17	12
Percentage of paper portfolios maintained/completed	38	26
Satisfaction surveys (e.g., students, parents, educators)	26	18

14. Stage of ECAP implementation:

	n	%
Fully Implemented (i.e., comprehensive process in place)	59	40
Partially Implemented (i.e., working on a process)	79	54
Beginning Implementation (i.e., discussing a process)	9	6
Nothing (i.e., no ECAP process)	0	0

15. Level of ECAP implementation:

	n	%
Level 1: Awareness — Gathering information to inform our plan.	8	5
Level 2: Exploration — A clear plan to facilitate installation.	15	10
Level 3: Installation — Successfully completed first steps of our plan.	27	18
Level 4: Initiation — Managing expectations and forces.	29	20
Level 5: Operation — Tested and evaluated our process.	18	12
Level 6: Innovation — Made improvements that benefit students.	29	20
Level 7: Sustainability — Ensured long-term survival and effectiveness.	21	14

16. Format used to save ECAP information:

	n	%
Paper	18	12
Electronic	54	37
Both paper and electronic	75	51

17. Electronic tools:

	n	%
Arizona Career Information System (AzCIS)	78	53
Naviance	16	11
Kuder	15	10
Bridges – Choices	2	1
Career Cruising	1	1
District designed system	11	7
Combination of AzCIS and other	10	7
Not using an electronic tool	14	10

18. ECAPs are transferred between grade levels:

	n	%
Electronically	104	71
Cumulative student folder	42	29
Student/family responsibility	1	1

19. ECAP information is shared:

	n	%
AzCIS/tool login information is provided to the student	65	44
Paper cumulative student folder transfer	13	9
Plan is included with transcript information	8	5
Student/family responsibility	12	8
Not yet transferring ECAP information	46	31

20. Community organizations and partnerships:

	n	%
After school programs	6	4
Boys and Girls Clubs	0	0
College Depot or other such programs	6	4
Community colleges	25	17
Community libraries	1	1
Gear-Up/Trio/Upward Bound	5	3
Joint Technical Education Districts	3	2
Universities	3	2
YMCA	1	1
None	91	62
Other	7	5

Part III. Technical Assistance and Professional Development (N=147)

Highlights

- Respondents cite two major challenges to implementing ECAPs: time (71%) and scheduling (52%).
- Respondents (56%) prefer the Arizona Career Information System (AzCIS) more than other supports for implementing ECAPs.
- The top three types of assistance desired by respondents are AzCIS training (56%), best practices (52%), and the ECAP implementation process (51%).
- A majority of respondents prefer that technical assistance be available online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week (59%) and delivered during regional trainings (55%).
- Most respondents (60%) prefer annual ECAP implementation surveys to more frequent administrations, and about one-third provided contact information.

21. Major challenges to implementing ECAPs:

	n	%
Access to information, exemplars, and expertise	30	20
Communication within our school and/or district	34	23
Few well-trained career counselors, educators, and parents	37	25
Insufficient support, training, or resources	46	31
Longitudinal data systems	16	11
Scheduling (i.e., ability to schedule or embed development opportunities)	76	52
Staff interest and engagement	35	24
Technology	55	37
Time	104	71
None	4	3
Other	11	7

22. Supports for implementing ECAPs:

	n	%
AzCIS	82	56
Other online career information systems	22	15
Comprehensive counseling and guidance programs	44	30
Comprehensive implementation plans	24	16
Districtwide ECAP curriculum	29	20
ECAP website	33	22
Partnerships and/or community-based organizations	8	5
Sharing with and learning from other schools/districts	41	28
Training and professional development	39	27
None	5	3
Other	13	9

23. Types of assistance desired:

	n	%
ECAP Attributes and Elements	52	35
ECAP Implementation Process	75	51
AzCIS Training	83	56
ECAP Data Indicators cross walked with school goals	60	41
Best Practices	77	52
Resources	62	42
None	9	6
Other	3	2

24. Technical assistance delivery preferences:

	n	%
Delivered through the Regional Educational Centers	27	18
Available online 24/7	87	59
Webinar format	57	39
Regional workshop/trainings for counselors and other staff	81	55
Onsite workshop/trainings for counselors and other staff	68	46

25. Number of times each year that counselors should be surveyed:

	n	%
Once	88	60
Twice	50	34
Three times	5	3
Four	4	3